

WILSHIRE GARDEN MARKET

November, 2004 Newsletter

2821 Wilshire Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73116
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Established 1997

FALL FROM THE GROUND UP

Autumn is a beautiful time of year, a time of scarlet and gold leaves, comfortably cool air, and shorter days in which to prepare the garden for winter. Garden activities are numerous; this is not the time to think about resting. With a little knowledge, perhaps a garden journal and some quality tools, gardeners can make the most of this season.

The first frost date is October 31. In the first week of November (what a coincidence, that is *this* week), fertilize cool season grasses. Local experts advise applying only one pound of nitrogen per one thousand square feet if phosphorus and potassium are adequate *as proven by a soil test*. Now is a good time to soil test to correct nutrient deficiencies before winter.

Keep dead leaves from accumulating on the lawn as they can suffocate the grass. Dead leaves in flower beds harbor pests and are unattractive. Handy for cleaning up leaves, double thick paper lawn bags (found at Wilshire Garden Market) stand alone, have a plastic band insert to hold them open, hold a large amount of leaves, and can be reused numerous times, making them cost effective and useful. Small hand rakes (found at WGM) are invaluable for cleaning leaves out of flowerbeds without disturbing plants.

Replace warm weather annuals with cold weather annuals, such as violas and pansies. Given sunny locations, in containers or in the garden, they will usually survive cold temperatures, providing thick masses of fragrant blooms through late spring.

Some perennials have become leggy or unruly, and will benefit from pruning. High quality Felco pruners or favorite deadheading scissors by Joyce Chen will make pruning a pleasure. Some perennials overwinter best if they are pruned very little; their foliage acts as insulation during the cold winter months. Lavender, Joe Pye Weed, and cone-flowers have attractive branches, leaves, or seed-

heads that provide fall and winter beauty as well as food for birds.

Bulbs planted from November to December provide welcome beauty in the spring; coming up like surprise gifts. *Wilshire Garden Market has a large supply of bulbs from Klee Black for sale until Thanksgiving.*

Apply mulch to flower beds to protect perennials, shrubs, and trees from freezing temperatures and to conserve moisture. Apply mulch after the ground cools, but before it freezes.



The front garden and entry represent the entire home to passersby and guests. Place seasonal flags or banners at the entry. Doormats are another welcoming touch and help keep dirt outdoors. Plant materials in hayracks, window boxes, and containers should reflect the season. Young evergreens, evergreen ground covers, and cool season annuals blend well and will survive cold temperatures. Gourds, pumpkins, pinecones, and other natural items contrast or complement the plant materials.

WILSHIRE GARDEN MARKET ASKS THE EXPERTS

In order for our readers to be better informed regarding the latest trends and all matter of horticulture and landscape design issues, our series of interviews continues with knowledgeable experts in their fields.

Dubbed “The King” of landscape design by those in the know in Norman, Steve Hill is a professor of landscape architecture. The Sam Noble Museum of Natural History is among his recent landscape projects. He also teaches garden design classes at the Firehouse Art Center in Norman.

Q: What do you consider when you go about creating a four season landscape?

A: I start with structure. These are the elements that shape the composition and provide the stage for the eye catching and interesting elements like seasonal color, textural combinations, fragrance, wildlife attraction, etc.

Q: What thoughts go into the plant choices you make for a customer’s landscape?

A: First I like to find out what individual clients like. Also I try to find out if there are any plants that they despise. For instance, we rarely plant poison ivy or ragweed. Then with that list as a general guide, I look for plants that are a little extraordinary and unusual, but ideally with a proven track record.



Q: What are some of your favorite plants—ones that you use often in landscapes, and why?

A: In trees, I like Lacebark Elm, Possumhaw, Redbud, Pistache, almost anything that weeps, Japanese Maples, and many more. In shrubs I am fond

of using nandinas of all varieties, many Hollies, Mahonia, Yews, upright Junipers, all of the Spiraeas; it depends on if it is for sun or shade, wet or dry, large or small...In the groundcovers I like to work with Monkey Grass, Golden Moneywort, Lamiastrum, Sedums, Plumbago, Junipers, and Ajugas. In perennials and annuals, there are too many to list; come see my slide show!

Q: Have your customers been asking for anything unusual this year?

A: I have many requests for water features although we build more dry stream beds than wet ones. Fire pits are popular, and we are doing our first tree house! We have been doing more ornamental vegetable gardens and we’ve even done a vineyard.

Contact Steve Hill for landscape estimates at wedigit@cox.net.

MULCH! MULCH! MULCH!

Applying mulch in the fall is the best way to protect perennials, shrubs, and trees from freezing temperatures. Mulch performs three basic functions: it reduces evaporation of valuable moisture, suppresses weeds, and protects plant roots from extreme temperature fluctuations. It should be applied evenly to properly insulate the soil; bare or low spots are prone to weed problems. Mulch should not be more than several inches deep around trees. Mulch should not touch tree trunks, shrub or flower stems because it can cause a bacterial infection.

COMPOST AND ORGANIC MULCHES decompose quickly, add nutrients to the soil, and encourage earthworm activity. Shredded leaves should be used as summer mulch and should be at least partially decomposed before being used as mulch. If not decomposed, they could compact and prevent water from absorbing into the soil.

COCOA HULL MULCH smells very nice, like cocoa. A bit more expensive, it is useful for containers and small areas. It can get moldy in shady areas. Words of warning: dogs are attracted by the scent of chocolate, and if ingested, the hulls could be toxic to them.

Plants in containers will perform best in warm or cold weather when given a blanket of small mulch. It prevents moisture loss and prevents potting soil from splashing back on the leaves when plants are being watered.

WHAT'S NEW AT WILSHIRE GARDEN MARKET



- Forest Path potpourri sold by the scoop.



- Vintage rose teacups hold potpourri.



- Flags and doormats in rich fall tones.



- Realistic silk plants and wreaths.

SEMINAR SERIES 2004/2005

These seminars begin at 10:30 a.m. Seminars are one hour in length, with time for questions at the conclusion. The fee is \$10 per person and seating is somewhat limited, so call now to reserve a space. Door prizes are given at each seminar. Please join us!

The 2004/2005 series is as follows:

Fri., Nov. 5	Linda Vater	"Holiday Gardening"
Sat., Jan. 2	Linda Vater	"Basic Garden Design"
Fri., Feb. 4	Linda Vater	"Gardening Fundamentals"
Sat., Mar. 5	Linda Vater	"Kitchen Garden"
Fri., Apr. 8	Linda Vater	"Use of Color in the Landscape"
Fri., May 6	Linda Vater	"Creating Curb Appeal"
Sat., June 11	Linda Vater	"Vertical Gardening"
Fri., July 8	Linda Vater	"Shade Gardening"
Sat., Aug. 28	Linda Vater	"How to keep Your Garden Looking Good"
Fri., Sep. 16	Linda Vater	"Container Gardening"
Sat., Oct. 15	Linda Vater	"Bulbs"

EXTERIOR DECORATING

This year give yourself a garden retreat, or refresh the one you have. In response to repeated requests,



Wilshire Garden Market now provides an exterior decorating consultation service. By appointment and for a nominal fee, we will make a consultation visit followed by written suggestions to make your garden retreat more charming, cohesive, and useful. We also plant pots or window boxes. Call the store for more details or to set up an appointment.

Let us help you create your outdoor living room!

WILSHIRE  GARDEN
M A R K E T

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COME IN FOR SPRING BULBS!

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